

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD

JULY 10, 2000

The Historic Conservation Board met at 3:00 P.M., in the J. Martin Griesel Room, Centennial Plaza II, with Messrs. Dale, Raser, Senhauser and Mmes. Borys, Spraul-Schmidt, Sullebarger and Wallace present. Messrs. Bloomfield and Kreider were absent.

### **MINUTES**

The minutes of the June 19, 2000 meeting were approved as amended (motion by Dale, second by Spraul-Schmidt).

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 1340 CLAY STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE (SOUTH) HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Caroline Kellam distributed drawings, presented a sample of the proposed parking lot fencing and summarized the staff report for a request to rehabilitate and restore the building, sometimes referred to as the Volunteers of America Building, for office use. She indicated that the building was constructed before 1905 and has been altered.

The proposed rehabilitation includes reopening blocked-up window openings on the north elevation and installing some new windows in that wall; constructing an addition on the south side to include an elevator, handicap access ramp and an entrance lobby; and parking lot improvements including a fence along Clay Street. The current curb cut will remain. The owners will apply for historic tax credits; therefore, requirements of the State Historic Preservation Officer must be met.

The elevator shaft of the addition will be unpainted concrete block with glass panels in the entrance area; the brick building will be repainted. Replacement windows on the north side will be similar to the existing aluminum replacement windows. The Zoning Department has determined that no variances are needed either for the building rehabilitation or the parking lot improvements. No one attended the pre-hearing conference. Mark Gunther, architect, and Bill Baum, developer, were present to answer questions. A prototype of the fence design was available for examination.

Ms. Sullebarger inquired about the material of the exterior walls of the present building (painted brick) and the recommended materials for new work in the district. She expressed concern about the compatibility of the proposed concrete block addition with the original brick and noted that concrete block is specifically prohibited in the guidelines.

Mr. Gunther explained that the design of the addition emphasizes the materials of which it is constructed; for this reason, the addition will not be painted. He stated that, if the Board finds block acceptable, there are alternatives to the old, generic, flat concrete block that was the only surface treatment available when the guidelines were written. The block can be a ground or glazed faced, or it can be painted to be more in keeping with the brick of the original building.

Ms. Borys expressed concern that the strong horizontal line at the base of the original building is not continued in the addition; the addition is post-modern and not in keeping with the original building; and the fence is not compatible with the original building. The guidelines for fencing permit metal picket fencing with stone or concrete piers; the proposed design does not meet that requirement.

### **BOARD ACTION**

After discussing the project, the Board voted to table the issue (motion by Sullebarger, seconded by Raser) until the applicants work with staff to develop and present a plan acceptable to the Board and provide samples of the building material for the elevator shaft and an acceptable fence design.

The Board expressed concern about

- The adherence of the proposed improvements to the Over-the-Rhine Historic District Guidelines, particularly the concrete block addition and the material and design of the horizontal fence panels and their compliance with the guidelines.
- The relationship of the addition to the original building.
- The surface-type and color of building material used for the elevator shaft. The Board suggested brick or ground-faced concrete block painted to match the building.
- The window treatment is different in the new and old windows of the building. The Board suggested the windows be consistent on the same elevation, possibly two over two windows, like some of the existing ones.

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS--1315 REPUBLIC STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE (SOUTH) HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Daniel Young summarized the staff report for Emanuel Community Center's application to demolish this contributing building. The Board tabled the application on October 11, 1999, to allow the applicant and the neighborhood time to explore alternatives to demolition of the building and to permit the applicant to further develop its overall plan. The Center owns another building at 1314 Race Street; it has committed to renovate the current three apartments there into six apartments over time to ensure that no housing units are lost as a result of the demolition of 1315 Republic Street. Michael Battoclette, project architect, was available to answer questions.

Ms. Sullebarger asked staff to clarify whether the Center must demonstrate economic infeasibility as a condition for demolition. Mr. Young explained the City's historic conservation legislation requires a non-profit owner to demonstrate that there is no prudent alternative to demolition that would allow the owner the use of the property in a manner compatible with its organizational purposes.

Details for the proposed improvements such as parking lot, fencing, playground equipment, etc., at both the Republic and Race Street sites, will be submitted to the Urban Conservator for approval prior to construction.

Ms. Bonnie Neumeier and Ms. Carrie Johnson, representing the Over-the-Rhine Community Council, spoke in support of the Center's proposal.

**BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Sullebarger, second by Spraul-Schmidt) to:

1. Find that there is no feasible and prudent alternative alteration or environmental change that would conform to the guidelines; and the strict application of the guidelines would:
  - a. deny the owner the use of the property in a manner compatible with its organizational purposes; and
  - b. amount to a taking of the property without just compensation.
2. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the building at 1315 Republic Street in the Over-the-Rhine (South) Historic District on the condition that the applicant submit plans for all site improvements for its properties in the vicinity prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a demolition permit.

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 1600 MADISON ROAD, ST FRANCIS  
DE SALES CHURCH AND RECTORY**

William Forwood, Urban Conservator, summarized the staff report for this application to install air conditioning systems at these two buildings. The review includes exterior work at both the church and the rectory. It includes interior work in the church only. The Board treated the applications for air conditioning the rectory and the church as two different items.

For the rectory, staff recommended that the Board take the following action:

Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of Sanyo air conditioning units on the Rectory on the condition that the coolant lines not easily concealed on the exterior be routed on the interior of the building and that the condensers be located so as not to obscure the carved basement window lintels and be screened with plantings.

The Board heard testimony by Father Edward Jach; Craig Daingerfield, and Paul Ritchey, project engineer.

*[Ms. Sullebarger left the meeting after the vote on installation of air conditioning in the rectory.]*

For the church, staff recommended that the Board take the following action: Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of a central air conditioning system for the church on the condition that the system be installed with basement ducting and flush floor registers (in addition to the equipment mounted out of view in the choir anterooms) and not intrude on significant interior features referenced in the conservation guidelines for this property.

After a motion by Borys, seconded by Raser, to accept the staff suggestion to use basement ductwork and floor registers for installation of air conditioning in the church, there was discussion by the Board and input from Father Jach and Mr. Daingerfield. If the staff suggestion is followed, air conditioning can be installed without modification to the pews or wainscoting and will be reversible. The project

engineer/contractor had initially recommended this option, but his client preferred the small wall-mounted blowers as more practical and efficient.

Father Jach explained that the proposed renovations will actually enhance the pews because new pew ends will be installed where the pews now butt into the wall; the pew carving is on the back of the pew. The seating capacity of the church will be reduced by only 30; although the parish is growing, the church is never full.

Mr. Daingerfield said the ducted system costs about \$7000 more than the wall-mounted units, including the expense of pew alteration. Mr. Daingerfield displayed a sample blank for the new pew ends, similar to the pew ends on the first three rows of the church. He explained the duct system would produce a blast of cool air on people's feet; it also would not get the cool air to the center pews.

Ms. Vogt, speaking for the East Walnut Hills Assembly, said the Assembly wants to see the church air conditioned within the historic conservation guidelines.

Mr. Forwood stated that when he wrote the staff recommendation, he was unaware of plans for stacks to bring cool air above the pews and wainscoting; he based the staff recommendation on a forced air duct system with flush floor registers that would not require pew modification. Mr. Senhauser suggested extending the wainscot along the entire wall to house vents above pew level to minimize the visual impact but be more efficient than floor registers. Additional equipment would be mounted out of view in the choir anterooms.

Mr. Daingerfield explained that the Church was unaware that the church interior, and the pews, are subject to review by the Historic Conservation Board; therefore, the air conditioning equipment has been ordered and is ready for installation with the stacks running up the wall to distribute cool air.

#### **BOARD ACTION**

The Board unanimously approved (motion by Borys, second by Raser) a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of Sanyo air conditioning units on the rectory on the conditions that

1. the principal horizontal coolant lines are routed on the interior of the building;
2. all vertical coolant lines are well-placed on the exterior, subject to the approval of the Urban Conservator;
3. the condensers are located so as not to obscure the carving of the basement window lintels and are screened with planting.

The Board voted (motion by Raser, second by Borys) to table the issue of air conditioning in the church so the Church and the contractor can continue working with the Historic Conservation staff to explore alternatives and develop a plan that will both preserve the integrity of the church interior and allow air conditioning of the church. Suggestions from the Board included:

1. deliver cold air at the top of the wainscot, perhaps by running a linear diffuser above the pews but below the top of the wainscot,
2. preserve as much of the wainscot as possible,
3. shorten pews as little as possible and have them continue to attach to the wainscot.



**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS--801 PLUM STREET, CINCINNATI  
CITY HALL**

Mr. Young summarized the staff report on proposed alterations to the roof of City Hall and presented samples of materials, including roof tiles to match those of the existing clock tower; anodized roof cresting including finials and fencing; new laser-cut stainless steel crenellation pieces for the roof crest; a choice of three replacement finials on the tops of dormer windows: fiberglass, wood frame units covered with lead-coated copper; and carved Indiana sandstone similar to the existing. Plans also include tuck pointing, repairing and repainting exterior masonry walls in the west courtyard. Project architect Miriam Tuchman was available to answer questions.

Board members commented that the crenellation should be black with a tint of another color in it to give more depth and that the original iron trim would have been painted a dark color, but not black.

The exterior masonry walls in the west courtyard are already painted. Ms. Tuchman pointed out a brick building down the street that she thinks this is probably close to the original color of the courtyard wall before it was painted; she suggested painting the rest of the brick this color; white painted line detail is an option. Refurbishing of the chimney has been postponed.

Mr. Young emphasized that these repairs reintroduce building elements that have been missing for many years, such as the metal roof cresting and the dormer finials.

**BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Borys, second by Spraul-Schmidt) to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the exterior improvements to City Hall as shown in the plans submitted with permit application 2000P05322, including masonry tuck-pointing, repair and painting, on the conditions that

- roof replacement be with new clay roof tiles to match the existing, and
- all associated flashing and gutter work, match the existing, and
- the color of the new laser-cut stainless steel crenellations and the roof cresting including finials and fencing be anodized bronze, and
- the dormer window finials be carved Indiana sandstone to match the existing finials in size, shape, surface, texture and color as identified on the plan.

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS AND CONDITIONAL USE--1630  
SYCAMORE STREET, PROSPECT HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Caroline Kellam summarized the staff report for the proposed rehabilitation of this vacant building into three residential units. She indicated that staff has been quite lenient with the review of this project within the guidelines because the project will rehab deteriorated property that has long been vacant.

Plans include constructing a two-car wood frame garage addition at the rear that will have a roof terrace. This property will share a concrete parking pad with another property at 306 Milton Street that Scott Johnson, the owner of both properties, is currently rehabbing.

This building is located in a B-4 (General Business District) zoning district. Single-family, two-family and multi-family dwelling units located on the first floor or basement floor may be established provided that the Historic Conservation Board finds that the adjacent uses and conditions would not be injurious to the health, safety or morals of the occupants of the proposed dwelling units.

Ms. Kellam said that the new garage and the rehabilitation work meet the guidelines for the Prospect Hill Historic District. The proposed penthouse and the roof terrace will not be visible from Sycamore Hill and Milton Street. No one attended the pre-hearing.

Scott Johnson, the developer, was present to answer questions and explain the planned renovations. He said the difference in rent for the fourth floor apartment with one bedroom and two bedrooms will be approximately \$500/month; it is, therefore, very important to him to have both the deck and the second bedroom.

Mr. Donald Beck, architect and 30-year resident of Prospect Hill, expressed concern about the erosion of Prospect Hill guidelines regarding roof lines and visibility from the street and the precedent granting this Certificate of Appropriateness may set. He stated he had no concern about the garage. His concerns were:

1. The cut-away roof at the rear of the building that erodes the roof line.
2. The size of the windows, approximately 80% larger than any others in the building and larger than existing windows in the affected rooms, that will be highly visible from the street. These large openings will not only erode the building wall but window coverings on the interior of the windows will be highly visible from the street.
3. The penthouse on the front of the building that provides access to a deck will occupy 20% of the front elevation of the building and extends 11 feet above the roof at the front elevation, 6 feet higher than the highest roof peak. He said there are many other ways to provide a roof deck.

Mr. Johnson said he had understood that the deck should be invisible from street level only at the front elevation. He said he is interested in preserving the historic look of the building and in providing an attractive entrance to the neighborhood with two newly renovated buildings.

Board members expressed concern about the pent house, the large new windows, the access to the roof deck and the cut-away at the roof. Installing the roof deck but not cutting down the sidewalls was suggested; no one expressed concern about the garage.

Mr. Senhauser stated that roof decks in the Prospect Hill Historic District are one of the things the HCB most dislikes. He also acknowledged the economics that drive building roof decks to take advantage of the view.

#### **BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Dale, second by Borys) to accept the staff recommendation to

1. Find that the rehabilitation of this building will remove a blighting influence from the community and will further the aims of historic preservation in the district.
2. Find that the adjacent uses and conditions would not be injurious to the health, safety or morals of the occupants of the proposed dwelling units.
3. Approve the establishment of apartments on the first floor of the building at 1630 Sycamore Street in the Prospect Hill Historic District as a Conditional Residential Use.
4. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the new garage and rehabilitation of 1630 Sycamore Street with the following conditions:
  - A. The new window openings in the south wall match the existing masonry openings in the west wall.
  - B. Deny the construction of the penthouse and upper roof deck.
  - C. Permit the construction of the rear cut-away roof deck providing that the side walls remain intact.

**ADJOURNMENT**

As there were no other items for consideration by the Board, the meeting adjourned (motion by Spraul-Schmidt, second by Dale).

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William L. Forwood  
Urban Conservator

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John C. Senhauser  
Chairman

Date\_\_\_\_\_